

# **Journal of the American Society of Professional Graphologists**

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# **THE JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL GRAPHOLOGISTS**

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## **PURPOSE OF THE JOURNAL**

1. To present theoretical and research papers in scientific graphology according to traditional academic standards.
2. To create a forum for helping graphology gain a wider academic and professional audience in America.
3. To interface with the international professional graphological community.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

Manuscript inquiries should be addressed to Marc Seifer, Editor, Box 32, Kingston, RI 02881. Inquiries concerning subscriptions and memberships should be addressed to Thea Stein Lewinson, 9109 North Branch Drive, Bethesda, MD 20817.

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American Society For Professional Graphologists



# THE PRECONSCIOUS IN HANDWRITING

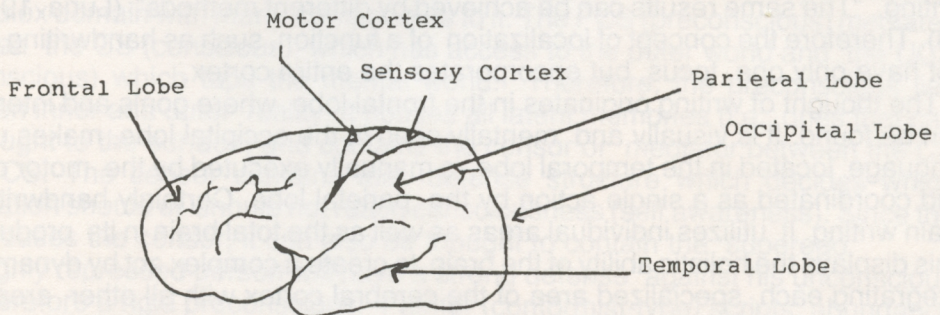
*Marc J. Seifer*

## ABSTRACT

The preconscious is a complex theoretical structure located between the Freudian conscious and the unconscious. It is a realm that encompasses latent memories, the censor, the defense structure, symbolic behavior and the automatism. Graphologically, preconscious automatisms can be seen as habitual psychomotor movements and/or as written symbols. These, in turn, have neurological and psychological counterparts. Handwriting crosses that borderland between thoughts and physical expression. The enclosed paper explores the nature of this crossover.

## BRAIN WRITING

In the 1890's William Preyer, a German professor of physiology, compared the handwriting of individuals when the pen was held by the hand, the foot and even the mouth. Preyer noted marked similarities in the form and structure of each sample and concluded that "hand" writing was really "brain" writing as it was centrally organized there. Since Preyer's times, it has been found that the organization of each of our psychophysiological functions are localized in different areas of the brain. Handwriting, although a unified procedure, is also made up of component parts. As a psychomotor procedure it utilizes each of the following lobes of the cerebral cortex for different purposes:



**FRONTAL LOBE**, situated in the forehead, is involved with all higher thought processes including reasoning and abstract ability. It mediates intentional and/or other conscious activities and therefore analyzes information from all other areas of the cerebral cortex.



**MOTOR AND SENSORY AREAS:** Midway between the frontal cortex and the occipital lobe lies the giant pyramidal cells which are involved with movement. The motor areas contain motor neurons which direct the movement from the brain to the muscles of the hand. The sensory pathway takes the information from the hand and brings it back to the brain.

**OCCIPITAL LOBE** is also called the visual cortex. Located in the back of the brain, the occipital lobe contains the projection area for all visual data. Dreaming produces EEG activity on the occipital lobe as well. The process of mentally or physically visualizing letters is carried out by this area of the brain.

**TEMPORAL LOBE**, situated on the side of the head above the ears, analyzes acoustical data as well as verbally related procedures involved in reading, talking and thinking. The left temporal lobe contains the speech center whereas the corresponding right temporal lobe contains the music center.

**PARIETAL LOBE** is involved with eye/hand coordination, spatial organization and simultaneous synthesis. During the act of writing this area coordinates input from the occipital and temporal lobes, thereby aiding integration of the seeing and mentally "saying" of words and letters as one writes.

### THE PSYCHOPHYSIOLOGY OF HANDWRITING

The well known Soviet neurophysiologist Alexander Luria tells us that for a movement to take place there must be constant corrections and thus, a feedback loop between sensory and motor areas. Every movement has the character of a *complex functional system*. This "system" is dynamic and flexible. Its holistic structure accounts for Preyer's discovery of the similarity of hand, foot and mouth writing. "The same results can be achieved by different methods" (Luria, 1973, p. 28). Therefore the concept of localization of a function, such as handwriting, does not have only one focus, but incorporates the entire cortex.

The thought of writing originates in the frontal lobe where goals and intentions can be found. It is visually and mentally seen in the occipital lobe, makes use of language located in the temporal lobe, is manually executed by the motor cortex and coordinated as a single action by the parietal lobe. Certainly handwriting is brain writing. It utilizes individual areas as well as the total brain in its production. This displays the holistic ability of the brain to create a complex act by dynamically integrating each specialized area of the cerebral cortex with all other areas.

During ontogeny writing initially consists of complete expanded series of manipulative movements which gradually become condensed and have acquired the character of mental inner actions. As a rule they are based on external aids such as language [and other forms of social interaction].... They are mediated by them and cannot, in general, be conceived without their participation. (Vygotsky in Luria, p. 30)



This is why mental functions as complex functional systems cannot be localized in narrow zones of the cortex or isolated cell groups, but must be organized in systems of concertedly working zones, each of which performs its role in complex functional systems and which may be located in completely different and often distant areas of the brain. (Luria, p. 30)

Stated differently, Werner Wolff (1948) tells us that "an individual's movements are not the result of specific muscle groups.... There is a reflection of inner relationships" (p. 21). Handwriting reveals intra-cerebral coordination, but handwriting is even more than brain writing.

### **MIND WRITING**

Handwriting as a psychophysiological mechanism, reflects the organization of the physical brain, as well as the psychology of the mind. On the biological side, it expresses various neurological mechanisms, expressions of the various lobes of the cerebral cortex, hemispheric dominance, influence of the mid-brain, brain stem, endocrine system and so-forth; on the psychological side, it displays conscious, preconscious and unconscious aspects of the psyche. Handwriting lies on that magical borderline between mental reality and physical actuality. The will, which is related to intentional aspects of the instincts and ego, also lies on this border. In a derivative or Jungian sense, handwriting as a symbolic expression also reveals the personality of the species. Just as mind interacts with matter through the brain, thoughts are transcribed into physical reality through handwriting.

### **THE PSYCHOLOGY AND NEUROPHYSIOLOGY OF THE PRECONSCIOUS**

The preconscious is a theoretical construct originally postulated by Freud. It is a complex domain with many components to it. The PCS (preconscious) mediates between the CS (conscious), which has access to the outer world and the UCS (unconscious) which taps the mental world. Therefore, the preconscious lies between inner and outer reality. It houses all latent memories (i.e., ones that can be brought to the surface) and contains the censor or mediator between the CS and UCS. The censor contains the defense structure which decides which information should or should not reach consciousness (self awareness). Since the PCS houses the censor, it can also be thought to contain the superego.

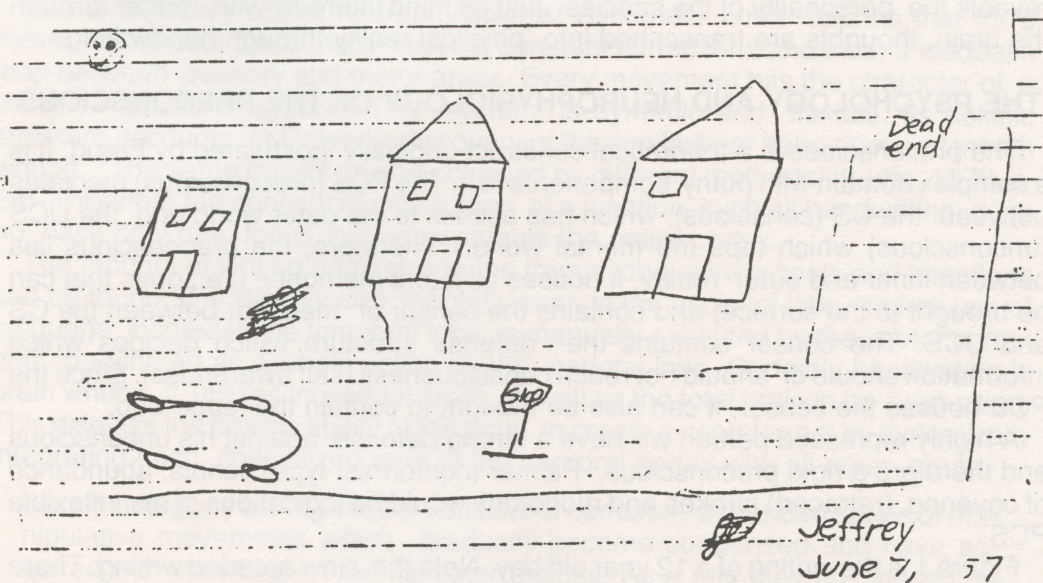
A highly repressed person will have a strong defense against his unconscious and therefore a rigid preconscious. Palmer (conformist-type) scripts, abundance of covering (retraced) strokes and monotony would be indications of an inflexible PCS.

Figure 1 is the writing of a 12 year old boy. Note the slow arcaded writing. There is an overabundance of covering strokes as well as extreme slant to the right. This is the writing of a repressed young man who is afraid to be alone or think independently. His censor, which is housed in the PCS is symbolized by the Stop



I am Jeffrey T. Now I'm taking  
a handwriting test to judge my  
abilities. I attend Lawrence Junior  
High. Next year I'll be in the  
High School. Then I will enjoy  
many activities and clubs.

I am Jeffrey T. Now I'm taking  
handwriting test to judge my abilities.  
attend Lawrence Junior high. Next year  
I'll be in the High School. Then I  
enjoy many activities and clubs.



1. The handwriting, printscript and drawing of a 12 year old boy. Note how repression is expressed in three different ways.



sign and by the Dead End in the drawing. His creative unconscious is being guarded too strictly by a strong defense structure. However, although the drawing lacks imagination, and the writing appears monotonous, the printing shows some flexibility and independence of thought noted by the simplified capital I's and by the rebellious disregard for i-dots. One would have to guess that this boy is in a transitionary stage and that his censor, although strict, does enjoy some flexibility. There is a clear battle here between pressures to conform (top handwriting) and a tendency towards individual expression (bottom).

### **CONSCIOUS, PRECONSCIOUS AND UNCONSCIOUS IN HANDWRITING**

**CONSCIOUS.** The conscious (CS) has two functions. It is an organ of awareness, and also it is an apparatus that gives the unconscious (UCS) access to motility (i.e., to the physical body). Consciousness as a process is actually, for Freud, a function of the UCS. Thus, in an ironic sense, Freud's unconscious is linked to intentionality and self awareness through its conscious apparatus. One can be conscious of inner or outer states as well. The more conscious (CS), the more one is aware of and makes use of the unconscious (UCS), but also, the more purposefully one's fate is directed. The layout of a page of writing and the general direction of the total movement is a conscious procedure. Slow scripts are more self conscious than faster ones.

**PRECONSCIOUS.** All memories that we can remember are in the preconscious (PCS). The PCS also houses the censor and thus the defense structure. For this reason, the preconscious is the repository of the automatism (explained below) and corresponding prelogical behavior patterns.

**UNCONSCIOUS.** The unconscious (UCS) houses all memories we cannot remember either because they are forgotten or because they are repressed. At the same time, Freud tells us that the UCS is the TRUE PSYCHIC REALITY. Our real self (e.g., our soul) is hidden in the unconscious. Consciousness can be thought of as one of many functions of the all inclusive unconscious. In the same sense, the PCS is actually also part of the UCS. The UCS is everything, but it has PCS and CS aspects to it. The UCS continues to think during the day while consciousness naively considers the UCS to lie dormant. We as graphologists and as psychologists know that the UCS contains a great percentage of one's motivating impetus.

All that is repressed is in the UCS. It is through the preconscious (PCS) or the censor that UCS thoughts must pass in order to reach either self-realization or self-expression. In Freudian terms, this release of unconscious energy is called a HYPERCATHEXIS. It is the function of the censor and defense structure to COUNTERCATHECT or oppose the release of this energy. While the censor is asleep at night, these repressed thoughts tend to surface although they are still distorted by the weakened censor; but since consciousness tends also to be



asleep, most dreams, although released through the CS apparatus (i.e., hypercathected), are barely and rarely consciously perceived. We tend to remember a small percentage of our dreams.

CS and PCS movements are learned, but the overall pattern of movement is neither CS or PCS.

We can not bring to consciousness why we incline a certain letter, why we put the dot over the i in a certain place, why we emphasize a curve.... While the direction of the total movement is CS and single steps are PCS, its form and quality are UCS. (Wolff, 1948, p. 3)

In order to fool the censor, the UCS may use defense mechanisms such as displaced aggression, denial, rationalization, reaction formation and intellectualization. During the day, this tendency to circumvent the censor and release tension may result in prelogical or symbolic behavior patterns, e.g., quirks. At night, when the censor is weakened by sleep, the repressed material may be disguised by various primary process maneuvers during dreaming, e.g., substitution, compression or representation by the opposite.

Figure 2 is that of a left-handed 26 year old successful comedian. It is replete with symbolic psychomotoric expressions stemming from the preconscious. At the time of this writing, two years before he actually established himself, there may have been some displaced aggression or feeling of competition towards myself. This is evident in the heavy pressured downstroke of the M of Marc. Bob was just starting out in the entertainment business at this time and wanted to control his ego drives. His hidden or disguised need for recognition is evident in many of the lower case i's which force themselves into the upper zone, i.e., they become disguised capital I's. Bob wants to be humble, so the displaced ego drives, evident in the handwriting, are also evident in his controlled discussions concerning his rise in the entertainment profession. The angular lower loops seen especially in the letter "g" at the bottom of the page, relate to his rebellion from the ways of the parents as well as to his aggressive sexual humor. The rhythmical integration and emphasized rightward trend reflects his conscious motivation to succeed in a difficult field, and the aesthetically pleasing pattern is reflective of a dynamically creative unconscious.

Figure 3 contains an analogous type of prelogical or symbolic psychomotor movement in that the writer tries to emphasize the ego without doing it overtly. Both sections of this sample are part of the same four page letter. The top part is the second page. Note the curious G-like e's throughout this sample, and their total absence in the last more spontaneously written page. Her signature, Margi, is pronounced with a hard G sound. And so the G-like e, although chosen consciously for aesthetic reasons, was actually intrinsically motivated by unconscious ego drives.

It is an inventive letter, but also it is a disguised pat on the back. Due to the multidimensional nature of symbols, this letter also displays a creative uncon-



Max,-

Thanks for taking the time  
to write out a piece - but  
I can't use it - I'm working  
in the direction of developing  
characters in set pieces or  
chunks of material -

What you wrote has the tone  
of Groucho or Shitich, and  
I'm moving in a different  
direction.

I'll try to get out a  
cassett with a few bits on  
it to give you a better  
idea of what's working -

Hope the studies are  
going well -

Bob -

2: The handwriting of a left-handed comic, note lower forms and rhythmical integration. The word of lines up diagonally down the page and this same automation can be found in his signature.



energetic at all p. 1  
 is so intrinsic I'm surprised at  
 your choice of the word "energy";)  
 Whether I ~~can~~ keep it inside is  
 up for consideration. But I think  
 you're wrong. Whatever 'energy' I  
 have, I think it is my decision  
 to exercise it - and I feel I  
 have done my share of that this  
 year. I think Pittsburgh will not

p. 4

I am skeptical about your  
 future plans but I feel it's not  
 my place to advise.

I'm going to Carnegie on the  
 4th. My address will be  
 Morewood Hall, <sup>Room</sup> 2-D-4.  
 Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh,  
 Penn. 15213. Have a good rest  
 of the summer -  
 May.

3: Note how the g-like e's change back to the standard form by the end of the letter. The letter g is also prominent in the signature.



scious which serves to express her individuality, while also circumventing preconscious defenses involving feelings of inferiority. Note also the overly large capital I's. This young lady is an identical twin and clearly needs to assert her uniqueness. In attempting to adapt this G-like e into her writing, Margi is trying to produce a totally spontaneous graphic pattern. But it is a fad, and the attempt will be unsuccessful because of its contrived nature and her inability to maintain false airs throughout the duration of the text.

## THE AUTOMATISM

Besides housing the censor and latent memories, the PCS, in physiological terms, also contains the automatisms which are learned responses that develop after practice. These habits or gestures contain our idiosyncracies, and also our individuality. They display how the person mediates between conscious, spontaneous and/or inhibited psychomotor movement patterns. A certain "trust" of unconscious processes and instinctual mechanisms are required in the development of PCS automatisms. They are learned responses which are developed through practice over time.

Just as we are unaware of single steps made by our moving feet, and just as we do not plan the movement of our typing or piano playing hand, so we are unaware of single writing movements.... They are automatized and function almost without direction of the details.... Our impulse is: get this object, walk to that goal, play this music.... How the general command which we give ourselves is fulfilled usually lies beyond our attention... but these single movements can be brought into consciousness — what is PCS can be made CS. (Wolff, 1948, p. 3)

Wolff goes on to say that we are preconscious of each step of the writing, but that CS and PCS movements are learned. The PCS develops over time. Since it houses the censor (which is guided by the superego), the PCS is under the direct influence of the demands of the environment. For example, if the society suggests that "one should not be egocentric," the UCS and id forces could influence the PCS to emphasize egocentricity through a disguised fashion. Graphically this is seen as large lower case i's in Figure 2, and the G-like e's in Figure 3.

Automatisms are mental as well as physical expressions. They are adapted for efficient operation of our bio-psychological machine.

Physiological automatisms facilitate the transformation and the saving of energy. The success of many complicated achievements in central mental regions depends on automatization. Purposive achievements depend on some functions taking a flexible form, others an automatized form, and still others combining these two forms in various proportions. The ego must also be able to encompass automatized functions altered immediately [as Margi's G-like e's try to do] and without transition by a mere decision of will. However,



the disturbances caused by interrupting automatisms and compulsions are similar, but so are those caused by interrupting ego-syntonic drives. (Hartmann, 1952, p. 91)

Wolff helps explain the end of this quote in regards to writing:

It is possible that automatization functions as a stimulus barrier in the mental apparatus.... Automatisms, like other mental phenomena may be said to be under the control of the external world.... Automatization is characteristic of relatively stable forms of adaptedness which are the lasting effects of the adaption process. (Hartmann, p. 91)

Figure 1 shows its arcadedness and adherence to the Palmer method. These automatism are certainly stimulus barriers preventing individualized expressions whereas the ego-centric automatism in Figures 2 and 3 are actually displaying a breakdown of the perceived demands of the environment in order to satiate the demands of the UCS ego drives.

Figure 4 displays the ability of the PCS to mediate between the demands of inner needs versus outer reality. The upper writing is the one this 19 year old girl usually uses. Note the Palmer script, beginning strokes and arcadedness. This script obviously shows conformity to the demands of the environment.

The lower writing is just something she "fools around with"! As soon as the demands of the inner (true) self emerge, the entire structure of the writing and also the cerebral organization changes and new automatisms appear. Beginning strokes are abandoned, angles replace arcades, loops are dropped and original forms appear. This girl's PCS defense structure is one of suppression rather than repression. The upper handwriting now can be seen to display coping mechanisms rather than unconscious defense mechanisms. Her automatization displays an adaptable ego which has not yet decided to truly align itself with the individualized personality which is seeking unfoldment; but rather she hides her originality because of her perception of the repressing demands of a conforming society. Her PCS adapts both to the demands of society and that of the self, and has not allowed one to rule out the other. Graphologically we can, of course, see that with a disciplined yet flexible mind, the demands of the self yield a much more creative expression, the lower handwriting displaying more advanced automatization.

Automatisms are highly important in understanding the economical structure of the psyche for they allow one to think and write at the same time. Their central organization must therefore lie in the parietal lobe which, we remember, deals with simultaneous synthesis. (More deeply ingrained ones, e.g, walking, bike-riding, step-climbing, are also reprogrammed in the cerebellum, a lower brain center; see Seifer, 1989 for further discussion of the role of mid-brain and brainstem mechanisms in the organization of handwriting.)



Now is the time for all  
good women to come to the  
aid of their sisters.

Fran Skutumpah

Now is the time for all good  
women to come to the aid  
of their sisters.

Fran Wentraub

4: The writer stated that the top sample was her "normal" handwriting. Note the numerous positive changes in the lower script.



As the child develops any type of complex conscious activity, at first it is expanded in character and requires a number of external aids for its performance [such as mouthing the letters and words to the self as one writes].... Not until later does it gradually become condensed and converted into an automatic motor skill....

For example writing starts out as a chain of isolated motor movements, but with practice the process is radically altered and writing is converted into a "kinetic melody" no longer requiring the memorizing of the visual form of each isolated letter or individual motor impulses for making every stroke....

Similar changes take place also during the development of the higher psychological processes which changes, also, naturally, its cerebral organization.

The participation of the auditory and visual areas of the cortex, essential to the early stages of formation of [this] activity is no longer necessary in its later stages and the activity starts to depend on different systems of concertedly working zones. During ontogeny it is not only the structure of higher mental processes which changes, but also their relationship with each other, i.e., their interfunctional organization. (Luria, p. 31)

Luria is stating that a beginning writer such as young child, organizes his writing in different areas of the brain than mature, practiced writers. Automatisms reflect a special interfunctional organization and integration of the cerebral cortex so that in order to adapt a new letter into the script, as Margi tries to do, there is actually a cerebral restructuring and regression back to a former model of operation until the letter becomes fully automated and thus is produced subconsciously.

The use of automatisms displays the hierarchical nature of the cerebral cortex. As the formation of a letter becomes a preconscious procedure, the conscious is freed once more so that more intricate forms of thinking can take place while writing, e.g., one can think about the content of the page rather than how each letter or word is formed. The variations and inventiveness of the automatisms can also display a dynamically flexible cerebral cortex, one that is able to shift gears and learn to deal with its deeper strata.

The paradox is that although automatisms are consciously learned they reflect UCS processes because the CS is trying to learn how to produce the same movement unconsciously. Once automatisms are achieved, less energy is used in their creation (as in handwriting or playing the piano, etc.) and so consciousness can begin to operate on other levels while the PCS takes care of the rest.

### KINETIC MELODIES

Luria states that signatures are automatic "kinetic melodies." They take an ideographic form and are so impressed in the psyche that they are no longer simply perceived by the language centered left hemisphere, but are actually transferred over to the more abstract, symbolically oriented right hemisphere.



Words, abbreviations and logos such as STOP, USA, GULF, NBC, ETC are also ideograms which are perceived holistically and therefore penetrate into deeper layers of the psyche. Because of their symbolic stature, they too are shifted to the right non-verbal hemisphere and are perceived as ideas or pictures rather than mere words. From this we can deduce that automatisms involve more abstract and deeper layers of the psyche and correspondingly use of the non-verbal right hemisphere (and also use of the left hemisphere's parietal lobe which is involved with simultaneous synthesis).

Automatization reflects psychophysiological restructuring and thus different use of the brain as a whole and also as the sum of its parts. Automatization develops through practice, but can act as a stimulus barrier if the demands of the environment prevents flexible use of the PCS. Automatisms also become ideograms, or symbols reflecting deeper layers of the psyche. Pictorially, through the PCS, they portray CS and UCS (repressed) desires and needs. This is because the PCS is influenced by the CS as well as the UCS. All handwriting is automatized; it is the degree of automatization, its rigidity or flexibility and inventiveness which reflects the dynamic interchange between the demands of the self (in the UCS) and the demands of the environment (perceived by the CS). The meeting ground is the PRECONSCIOUS. If we define the self as the EGO, it is the PCS aspects of the EGO which we are talking about.

### **SYMBOLISM**

Written language, as an advanced form of human communication, developed out of the ancient cave drawings which were attempts by our ancestors to portray objects and important events from their lives. These, in turn, evolved into the pictorial hieroglyphics of the Egyptians, the less concrete forms as found in the Chinese and Hebrew alphabets, and the more abstract characters as seen in the Latin alphabet. Wolff (1948) notes that letters live beyond the individual and thus transcend time and space. "In ancient times, letters had a magic value and were considered symbols of conjuration from the innermost depths of existence." Writing displays not only intentional information, but hidden messages as well.

This relationship between the magical structure of the formation of the letters and the symbolic structure of man is explained by Klara Roman (1972):

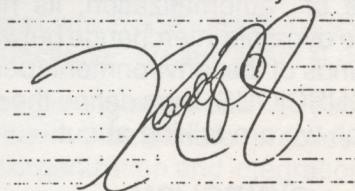
We tend to perceive letters as having volume: three dimensional configurations standing upright like a man standing on the ground. This ground is symbolized by the implied baseline. For we speak of upright letters, in spite of the fact that they actually lie flat on the plane of the paper. This attests to something that projection theory has long recognized — man's tendency to project the self onto the object that meets the eye, and to invest this object with the tensions and emotional impulses actually operating in himself. In writing, this leads to an identification with the letter form, upon which the writer



projects his psychic activity in the guise of images and symbolic gesture. (p. 137)

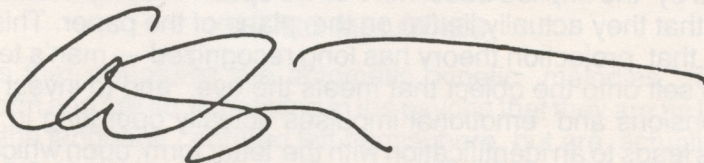
Symbols are expressions of intense emotional cathexes. "Through repeated occurrences... an entire train [of thought] may ultimately be concentrated into a single unit. This is a fact of compression of compensation" (Freud, 1938, p. 530) whereby, through a single gesture, a constellation of suppressed or repressed material can be hypercathected (i.e., released), and thereby expressed.

All language and writing is symbolic, as individuals tend to choose and create certain idiosyncratic psycho-motor configurations in order to satisfy the wants or desires of the CS, PCS and UCS. Symbols can reflect a unifying factor in the organization of personality. If conceived as "kinetic melodies" they display the physiological integrative function of the multidimensional cerebral cortex; if conceived of as psychological projections, they display the symbolic "nodal points" of whole trains of thought that Freud talks about. They are prelogical and/or preverbal compromises which are allowed by the censor to be expressed.



5: The spiraling handwriting of a famous astiologer.

Figure 5 is the signature of a famous astrologer who has written a series of textbooks on the topic. It's excessive height and roundedness emphasizes the highly sensitive nature of this 6'6" opera singer/newspaper editor/ professional astrologer. He is egocentric, outspoken, caring and oftentimes brilliant. But as noted in the knot-tied script, he is caught up in an inflated self image. He is future oriented and highly ambitious, but held back emotionally by unresolved problems from the past. Although the writer may have difficulty communicating his true self to himself, (as well as to others), he is empathetic (roundedness), and a knowledgeable guide in therapy. The abstract signature pairs well with the astrologer. The circular movements look almost like the spiraling progression of the earth as it goes around the sun, as the solar system progresses through the galaxy. The figure 8 supports the hypothesis of an ambiguous self-image. He really does lead a cork-screw life.




6: The handwriting of a creative artist.



Another giant figure eight is evident in the next signature, Figure 6. Both these men's accomplishments reflect the idea of an infinite potential, but the composite nature of the symbol tells the graphologist that the figure eight also points towards a certain ambivalence or difficulty in releasing the past, always tying it in, as the writer progresses into the future. This signature is that of an artist who was adopted at four and one half years of age. With this information the figure eight now seems to point to the mystery of his birth and a continuing concern regarding the womb from which he sprang.


If we compare both signatures, we find that both are illegible, use rounded forms, are rather large, abstract, and both utilize a large figure eight. Certainly, there are some similarities in their respective natures, as both are highly creative, warm hearted, self-contained and interested in metaphysics; however, it is also clear that the same or similar automatized habitual psychomotor patterns (i.e., symbols) will reflect different psychological trains of thought dependent in part on the experience of the writer and in part on some inner symbolic psychobiological need.

*Important*  
*Should TAI callful Cylin*  
*Please give call to Ruth*  


7: The writer plays the violin.

The next signature, Figure 7, is a personalized initial for the name Doris. The heart-shaped lower loop relates to her warm personality and the flashy releasing upswing visually pairs well with the fact that she is a violin teacher. This ideogram, itself, looks abstractly like a musician moving his or her bow over the stringed instrument.

The next handwriting is that of comedian Jimmy Durante. Clarity of thought is evident in the simplicity of the script and in the fine spacing. Note what appears to be the symbol of his famous proboscis drawn spontaneously in the loop of the P of pleasure!

*To Dorothy*  
*This is a Pleasure*  
*my Very Best wishes*  
 Jimmy Durante

8: The pictorial handwriting of Jimmy Durante.



March 28, 1973

Dear Kitty

Many, many thanks for your  
kindness -

Unfortunately, our plans were  
altered at the last minute and I was  
unable to attend, but you were  
kind to think of me -

Steve

9: The automatism of the lateral stroke predominates in this script, even taking over the structure of the capital R in the signature. Note how these strokes synchronistically line up down the page thereby displaying an unconscious rhythmic configuration.



From my studies, I have come across many people who have favorite letters or diacritics or symbolic forms, and because of them whole written pages are preconsciously constructed to maximize their use. Oftentimes, they cluster or line up synchronistically down a page, or as Dan Anthony has noted, they create touchpoints with other rhythmically executed strokes. Werner Wolff's text *DIAGRAMS OF THE UNCONSCIOUS* attempts to explore the tendency towards wholeness expressed in writing by measuring the symmetry, consistency, rhythm and periodicity of, in particular, the signature. Wolff coins the term "configuration" to stand for the unconscious harmonious arrangement of these various aspects of the writing. This configuring principle is unlearned. "Whatever the personality trends are which determine expressive movement, they seem to become configured just as spread iron filings are configured by a magnet" (p. 96).

Jung's hypothesis of the archetype, as a "formative pattern... [or] tendenc[y] towards [a] particular style... of life" is a concept linked to these ideas, as is his idea of synchronicity, or meaningful coincidence. Note how the word of in Figure 2 lines up exactly, diagonally down the page. Note also that the automatized pattern of this word is identical to the last two letters of Bob's signature. The capital I is another configuration which often lines up in touchpoint fashion down a page. This synchronistic configuring expression of the centralizing ego is also evident in Rick's signature, Figure 9, whereby the kinetic melody of the dash predominates. Note how it replaces both the curved part of the top of the capital R in Rick and the period at the ends of sentences. This lateral stroke also lines up precisely down the page along with other similar graphics such as the t-bar. Extreme precision of this tendency towards patterning is evident. This neurophysiological holistic propensity stems from very deep layers of the unconscious.

These archetypes, motifs or themes underlie the patterns of symbolism that belong to the process of growth in the psyche... the essence towards depth then is growth towards wholeness. (Progoff, 1968, p. 8)

Certainly this self-actualizing and unifying tendency is also evident in a different way in the signatures above, whereby the depth and scope of the person's existence is expressed as a stylized insignia.

The preconscious is a vast area of the psyche. It is not only a meeting ground of the conscious and unconscious, but also a repository for the symbols, automatisms, defense mechanisms and structure of the censor. As the first layer of the unconscious, the preconscious is a gateway to the deeper layers of the psyche.

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